



IMMANUEL  
ANGLICAN CHURCH

**POLICIES FOR THE PROTECTION  
OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH**

Immanuel Anglican Church

*Adopted January 2023*

Dear leader,

Thank you for your desire to serve in Immanuel Anglican Church's ministries for children and youth. Our vision is to see every child and youth encounter Jesus Christ and be transformed by the power of the Gospel to become a lifelong disciple of Christ.

As a church, we believe that safeguarding the spiritual, emotional, and physical well-being of children is one of our most important callings. Our policies ensure that church activities involving children are consistent with the teachings and example of our Lord Jesus Christ and with the Christian tradition of nurturing children.

This policy provides a general overview of procedures and guidelines which are intended to facilitate a safe and nurturing environment in which children can grow in their relationship with Jesus Christ. Following these guidelines will protect children, you and the mission of Immanuel Anglican Church. The following procedures have been adopted and will be diligently enforced.

After you have carefully read this policy manual, please sign and return the agreement form located on the last page.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Wood, Next Generation Ministries Director  
Contact: [jennifer@immanuelanglican.org](mailto:jennifer@immanuelanglican.org) // (630) 360-5435

# Table of Contents

- PART I: Introduction 5
  - Definition of Terms
  - Current Safety Leaders
  - Prohibition on Abuse 6
  - Definitions of Abuse and Neglect of Minors
  - Definition of Grooming Behavior 7
  - Violations Of This Manual
  
- PART II: Overview of Immanuel’s Five Step Safety System 8
  - Step One: Screening 9
    - Attendance Minimum
    - Background Checks
    - Church Screening
  - Step Two: Training 10
    - Reading Requirements
    - Training Requirements
  - Step Three: Interacting 11
    - Accountability (Rule of Three)
    - Supervision & Safety
      - Worker-to-Child/Youth Ratios 12
      - Bathroom Supervision and Assistance 13
      - Sick Child Policy 14
      - Medication, Health, and Safety
      - Parental Contact and Involvement
      - Release of Children 15
    - Interpersonal Interactions
      - Verbal Communication
      - Physical Interactions
      - Discipline 16
      - Sexual Ethics
      - Guidelines for Pastoral Care and Mentoring of Youth 17
    - Electronic Communication 19
      - General Guidelines
      - Virtual Environments
    - Transportation and Travel Considerations 20
      - Church Travel
      - Transportation
      - Sleeping Arrangements 21
    - Personal Conduct 22
      - Dress
      - Substances
      - Photography
      - Cards & Gifts
      - Interactions & Relationships Outside of Church Activities 23
  - Step Four: Monitoring 24
    - Monitoring Practices of Safety Coordinator
    - Monitoring Practices of all Covered Individuals
    - Monitoring Practices of Parents
    - Monitoring Practices of Entire Community
    - Supervisory Enforcement of Policy 25
  - Step Five: Responding & Reporting 26

Responding to a Child or Youth Victim	
Steps Following a Disclosure	27
Mandated Reporting to Civil Authorities	28
Consequences for Failing to Report	
How to Report	29
Reporting with Others	
What to Report	30
Important Contacts for Reporting	31
Reporting to Church Authorities	
Reporting Suspicions of Abuse or Neglect	32
Reporting Policy Violations	
Immanuel Safeguarding Team	
Immanuel's Response to Reports	
Recusal of Persons Accused	33
Confidentiality	
Non Retaliation	
Statement 1: Acknowledgement & Agreement	34
Statement 2: Background Screening	35
Statement 1: Acknowledgement & Agreement	36
Statement 2: Background Screening	37

# PART I: Introduction

## Definition of Terms

When used in this manual, the following terms have the following meanings:

- **“Child”** means any individual under the age of twelve (12).
- **“Youth”** means any individual who is at least twelve (12) years of age and under the age of eighteen (18).
- **“Minor”** means any individual who is under the age of eighteen (18).
- **“Covered Individuals”** means church clergy, staff, parish council, contracted workers and all volunteers 18 years and older who work with or have access to children on behalf of the church.
- **“Children’s Director”** means staff member or volunteer charged with overseeing the church’s children’s ministry.
- **“Youth Director”** means staff member or volunteer charged with overseeing the church’s youth ministry.
- **“Rector”** means the ordained priest given oversight of the congregation, ministry teams, parish council, and personnel of the church.
- **“Ministry Leader”** means a person, volunteer or staff, who oversees a particular ministry within the church.
- **“Safety Coordinator”** means the individual charged to oversee and implement policies in this manual and to handle problems or concerns related to child and youth safety.
- **“Safeguarding Team”** is an Advisory Team of Immanuel’s Parish Council and exists to help prevent abuse at our church by providing a clear and safe place to report any allegations of abuse by an Immanuel Leader and assisting the church in its response to abuse allegations that may occur.

## Current Safety Leaders

**Safety Coordinator:** Jennifer Wood is Immanuel’s Safety Coordinator. She may be contacted by emailing [jennifer@immanuelanglican.org](mailto:jennifer@immanuelanglican.org) or by calling (630) 360-5435.

**Safeguarding Advisory Team:** The list of current team members may be viewed at [immanuelanglican.org/safety](http://immanuelanglican.org/safety). Contact this team by emailing [safeguarding@immanuelanglican.org](mailto:safeguarding@immanuelanglican.org).

## **Prohibition on Abuse**

Immanuel Anglican Church has zero tolerance for abuse in ministry programs and ministry activities. It is the responsibility of all Covered Individuals at Immanuel to act in the best interest of all children and youth in every program.

## **Definitions of Abuse and Neglect of Minors**

Child abuse refers to an act committed by a parent, caregiver, or person in a position of trust that is not accidental and that harms a child.

In Illinois, child abuse is defined by the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act (325 ILCS 5/3) and can be summarized as follows:

- Inflicting physical injury which causes death, disfigurement, impairment of physical or emotional health, or loss or impairment of any bodily function (accidents are excluded from the definition of abuse);
- Causing or allowing such injury to be inflicted (as opposed to direct infliction of the injury);
- Creating a substantial risk of such injury;
- Committing any sex offense against a child or allowing such an offense to be committed;
- Committing or allowing torture;
- Inflicting excessive corporal punishment;
- Inflicting any corporal punishment if you are working for an agency and prohibited from corporal punishment;
- Genital mutilation;
- Giving someone under 18 years old a controlled substance; and
- Involuntary servitude and sex trafficking.

Child neglect in Illinois is defined as allowing any of the following conditions to occur:

- Not receiving proper or necessary nourishment;
- Not receiving medically indicated treatment or medical treatment necessary for well-being;
- Not receiving adequate clothing or shelter;

- Being subjected to an environment that creates a likelihood of harm to the child’s health or welfare if the likelihood of harm is a result of the blatant disregard of the child’s caretaker’s responsibilities; and
- Being abandoned by parents or caretakers without a proper plan of care (does not include a child being relinquished under the Abandoned Newborn Infant Protection Act).

## **Definition of Grooming Behavior**

“Grooming” includes behaviors designed to overcome another person’s defenses by slowly desensitizing their natural reactions to abusive behaviors. Grooming works by mixing positive behaviors with elements of abuse. Abusive elements are added incrementally so as not to alarm the one targeted for abuse and to normalize inappropriate behaviors.

Grooming happens to both children and adults, and groomers typically groom everyone around their target—the institution, gatekeepers, community, and parents.

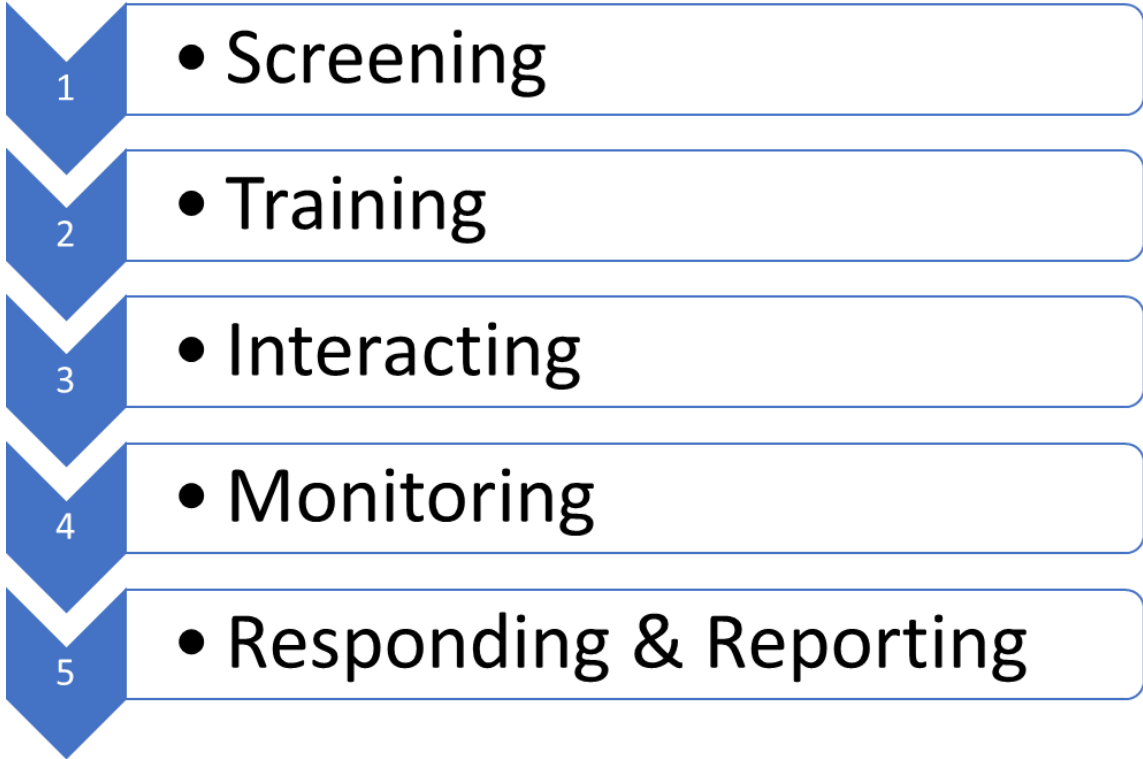
The steps a person often takes to groom a child include the following: (1) identifying the potential target; (2) befriending the child; (3) gathering information about the child’s interests and vulnerabilities; (4) filling a need and/or furthering an interest that the child has; (5) cultivating a “special friendship” with the child through targeted actions such as gift-giving or secrets; (6) isolating the target; (7) beginning to sexualize the relationship (lowers the child’s inhibitions, desensitizes the child to touch, engages in sex talk, may provide alcohol or drugs); (8) initiating increasingly intimate contact; (9) maintaining control; and (10) making the target feel responsible.

## **Violations Of This Manual**

Violations of policies in this manual will lead to discipline, up to and including immediate termination of an employee or volunteer. Volunteers who violate this policy may be restricted from participation in future activities involving children or youth at Immanuel. In addition, committing child abuse can result in criminal or legal consequences.

# PART II: Overview of Immanuel’s Five Step Safety System

The church requires all Covered Individuals to complete **SAFETY STEPS 1-2** below before ministry work or volunteer placements begin.





# Step One: Screening

**Screening** is an opportunity to prevent an abuser from ever having contact with children and youth in our programs. Our screening of Covered Individuals in the children and youth ministries includes:

## Attendance Minimum

Requiring a six-month minimum of in-person Sunday church attendance before anyone is eligible to serve in positions involving access to minors.

## Background Checks

Conducting National Sexual Offender Registry/Criminal Background checks and renewing them every three years. Depending upon the position or role, differing levels of background checks may be required.

## Church Screening

- Completing a face-to-face interview with a church ministry leader.
- Providing a signature stating that the Covered Individual and other adult members of their households have not been arrested for or convicted of the abuse of a minor.

Immanuel Anglican Church may, for certain positions and roles, also require a completed written application and the satisfactory completion of reference checks.

## Step Two: Training

**Training** puts the power to protect in everyone's hands and is an important deterrent to child abuse. Those who work with children or youth must be trained to recognize abuser characteristics and grooming behavior, commit to the safe practices specific to Immanuel Anglican Church, and learn the procedures for reporting suspected abuse.

### Reading Requirements

All Covered Individuals must certify that they have read, understood, and accepted Immanuel Anglican's policies on the protection of children and youth and sign a form indicating that they agree to comply with all policy requirements throughout their time serving in Immanuel's Next Generation Ministries.

### Training Requirements

- All Covered Individuals must complete MinistrySafe sexual abuse awareness training. This training will be renewed every three years.
- All Covered Individuals are Mandated Reporters and must complete the Training for Mandated Reporters and submit a certificate of completion to the Safety Coordinator every three years.

*The church recognizes that participating in training on abuse, including sexual abuse, may be difficult for individuals who have experienced abuse. Those who need support in connection with completing training requirements should contact their Safety Coordinator.*

## Step Three: Interacting

**Interacting guidelines** help children, youth, and adults feel safe in ministry and help detect problems before they turn into abuse. Following these guidelines not only helps prevent the circumstances under which abuse can occur, but also helps to foster a church-wide culture of vigilance, accountability and safety.

### Accountability (Rule of Three)

Everyone at Immanuel, whether volunteering with our NextGen ministries or not, should stay in visible and accountable spaces with children and youth. No adult should be alone with a minor who is not their own child at an Immanuel-sponsored gathering.

Covered Individuals should follow the **Rule of Three**, which requires that three people be present, except in extenuating and unavoidable circumstances. A Covered Individual and two youth or two Covered Individuals and one minor satisfy the Rule of Three. Married couples only count as one “person” for the Rule of Three.



On a rare occasion, a Covered Individual may unavoidably find him or herself alone with a minor (for instance, if a minor is dropped off early or picked up late, or if another Covered Individual must depart unexpectedly). When this occurs, the Covered Individual should promptly arrange to come into compliance with the Rule of Three and, while waiting for a third person to join, move to the most open and observable area possible, keeping doors open and windows unblocked.

### Supervision & Safety

Covered Individuals must act to ensure the appropriate supervision of minors in their charge.

- No child should ever be left unattended during children’s ministry programming or classes.
- Minors should not be alone in areas that are not visible or accessible to supervision. Any two minors together in an unseen or less easily viewed area should be redirected to another (more open) area.
- Any adults who are not Covered Individuals should obtain permission from the Children’s or Youth Director before participating in children’s or youth events.
- After every programming event, Covered Individuals working the event must ensure that every minor safely leaves, and that every room and restroom is checked and vacant prior to leaving.

**Worker-to-Child/Youth Ratios**

The church is committed to providing adequate supervision in all Children and youth ministry programming. If the proper ratio is not present, it is the responsibility of the Covered Individual to notify the Ministry Leader so that additional individuals may be found or the event canceled.

The following ratios are considered best practice and are to be pursued in all church events:

<b>Ratios for Children’s Ministry</b>		
<b>Program</b>	<b>Covered Individuals</b>	<b>Children</b>
Nursery (Birth-2)	2	Up to 8
Preschool (3-5)	2	Up to 16
Elementary (5-12)	2	Up to 20

<b>Ratios for Youth Ministry</b>		
<b>Program</b>	<b>Covered Individuals</b>	<b>Youth</b>
Youth Events at Church Building	2 unrelated <i>Add one Covered Individual for every additional 1-10 youth</i>	Up to 20
Small Groups	1 adult per group	Small groups of 3-10
Overnight or Away Events	4 – including at least one female and one male <i>Add one Covered Individual for every additional 1-10 youth</i>	Up to 20

### **Bathroom Supervision and Assistance**

All Covered Individuals will observe the following:

#### **A. Diapering of Nursery-Age Children**

Only the child’s parent or legal guardian will diaper children.

#### **B. Bathroom Use by Children (Up through age 11)**

Whenever possible, parents should be contacted if a child has a bathroom need during children’s programs so that the parent can take the child to the restroom. If a parent cannot be reached, follow these guidelines:

- School-age children may be accompanied to the restroom for supervision and assistance as needed. The Rule of Three should be followed, even if this means taking the entire class to the bathroom together.
- Additionally, when children are taken into bathrooms, the exterior bathroom door must be left open and Covered Individuals remain outside.
- If a child requires assistance, the Covered Individual should leave the exterior bathroom door open when entering the bathroom area and try to verbally assist the child while the child remains behind the door

of the bathroom stall.

- Children must never be left unattended in bathrooms.

### **C. Bathroom Use by Youth**

Youth over the age of 12 may be dismissed to visit the bathroom on their own at the discretion of the Covered Individuals leading the youth program.

### **Sick Child Policy**

Immanuel desires to provide a healthy and safe environment for all. Parents and guardians are therefore encouraged to be considerate of other children when deciding whether to place a child under our care. In general, children with the following symptoms should NOT be dropped off:

- Fever, diarrhea, or vomiting within the last 24 hours.
- Green or yellow runny nose.
- Eye or skin infections.
- Other symptoms of communicable or infectious disease.

### **Medication, Health, and Safety**

By having a minor participate in a church event or activity, parents give the church permission to administer basic first aid and obtain emergency treatment for the minor if the parent(s) cannot be promptly reached to arrange such care. If a minor needs assistance taking medication during church events, parent(s) will be asked to sign a consent and waiver form to permit the church to have Covered Individuals assist the minor.

Injuries that occur during child or youth activities should be reported to the Ministry Leader or to the Safety Coordinator, and an incident report should be completed.

### **Parental Contact and Involvement**

Parents who leave a child or youth in the care of Covered Individuals during church services or activities will be contacted if their child becomes ill or injured, has a severe behavior problem, or is exhibiting separation anxiety lasting more than ten minutes.

Parents are encouraged to visit any services and programs in which their child is involved. Parents who desire to participate in or have continuous, ongoing contact with their children's programs will be required to complete Immanuel's screening and training process.

## **Release of Children**

Covered Individuals are responsible for releasing children into the care of parents, legal guardians, or other persons designated by parents or legal guardians at the close of services or activities. It is presumed a person who drops off a child has authority to pick up the child.

In the event that a Covered Individual is uncertain of the propriety of releasing a minor, they should locate or contact their immediate supervisor, the Children's Director, or the Youth Director, before releasing the minor.

## **Interpersonal Interactions**

### **Verbal Communication**

Covered Individuals should strive to keep verbal interactions encouraging, constructive, and mindful of their mission of aiding parents in the spiritual growth and development of their children.

To this end, Covered Individuals should not talk to minors in a way that is harsh, threatening, intimidating, shaming, sexual, derogatory, demeaning, or humiliating. In addition, Covered Individuals are expected to refrain from swearing in the presence of minors.

This verbal interaction policy does not prohibit appropriate and constructive discipline or redirecting of a minor.

### **Physical Interactions**

Appropriate physical affection between Covered Individuals and children or youth is important for young people's development, and is generally suitable in a church setting. However, physical contact in any form must be above reproach and should not give even the appearance of wrongdoing.

- Physical contact and affection are permissible only when the Rule of Three is being followed.

- Appropriate interactions include: Pats on the back, handshakes, high-fives and hugs. Hugs should be given only when initiated by the child or youth, should be of short duration, and may not involve any inappropriate touch.
- A minor's preference not to be touched must be respected.
- Physical contact should be for the benefit of the minor and never based on the emotional needs of the Covered Individual.
- Inappropriate touching and inappropriate displays of affection are forbidden. Any inappropriate physical contact, touching, or displays of affection must be immediately reported to the Safety Coordinator.
  - Inappropriate interactions include: wrestling, kissing, forcing unwanted affection, sitting in laps (except nursery), commenting on children's bodies, massages, spanking, slapping, or any form of physical discipline.

Covered Individuals are responsible to intervene if they witness a minor experiencing inappropriate or unwanted touch by others, including from other children and youth.

## **Discipline**

Church policy prohibits Covered Individuals from using physical discipline in any manner to manage minors' behavior. This prohibition includes spanking, slapping, pinching, hitting, grabbing, biting, or any other physical force as retaliation or correction for inappropriate behaviors by minors.

Inappropriate behavior by minors is to be addressed using non-physical methods. If a situation requires a disciplinary response, Covered Individuals may take appropriate steps to interrupt, stop, or redirect behavior or actions.

All Covered Individuals are to respect the dignity and privacy of minors in their care and not discuss a minor's negative behavior with others who have no reason to know. Exceptions are for disclosures to those in a supervisory capacity or to those who need to be informed in order to address a situation.

## **Sexual Ethics**

Covered Individuals must take steps to maintain appropriate boundaries with minors. Covered Individuals must comply with the following:



**General Prohibitions:** Covered individuals are prohibited from (i) making comments of a sexual, romantic or otherwise intimate nature to or in the presence of a minor; (ii) soliciting, engaging in, or encouraging a dating, sexual or otherwise intimate relationship with a minor; and (iii) engaging in any contact of a sexual nature with a minor. This includes, but is not limited to, kissing, touching of a sexual or otherwise intimate nature, contact of any kind with intimate body parts, nudity, and the solicitation or sharing of images and materials of a sexual nature.

**Nudity:** Covered Individuals should never be nude in the presence of children or youth; neither should children or youth be nude in the presence of any other people. Covered Individuals, children, and youth should change in private, and if public showers are necessary as part of children or youth programming, showering should be done in swim trunks/bathing suits.

**Teachings about Sexuality:** It is expected that, from time to time, youth ministry discussions and lessons may address issues related to dating, sex, and human sexuality. These discussions and lessons will convey the church's views on these topics and must not involve a Covered Individual engaging in any communication that could be perceived to be a sexual overture, grooming, or sexual abuse of a minor. Covered Individuals should also refrain from discussing inappropriate details about their own romantic relationships with students.

**Prohibition on Materials:** Covered Individuals are prohibited from possessing, discussing, viewing, or sharing any sexually oriented materials (magazines, cards, images, videos, films, etc.) in the presence of any minor; such behavior is also a criminal offense.

**Redirection:** Covered Individuals are responsible to intervene and redirect if they witness a minor using inappropriate or sexualized language or making unwanted romantic or sexual advances toward another minor.

### **Guidelines for Pastoral Care and Mentoring of Youth**

Immanuel Anglican Church recognizes that meeting the needs of youth may require Covered Individuals to minister to or mentor them on an individual basis. Covered Individuals should follow the Rule of Three and conduct interactions with youth at a time when others are present and where interactions can be easily observed, such as on a Sunday morning or during regular youth group gatherings.

In the event that a youth needs to meet with a Covered Individual outside of ordinary ministry activities, the youth leader should first seek to follow the Rule of Three by asking another trusted Covered Individual (either another youth leader or clergy) whom the youth trusts to participate in the meeting. If for some reason another Covered Individual cannot participate, the following guidelines must be observed in the course of meetings and/or mentoring:

1. If a sensitive matter is being discussed that requires a Covered Individual to enter a different room with a youth to allow for a private conversation, the door should remain open, and other Covered Individuals should be notified ahead of time and should periodically monitor the situation.
2. In the rare event that a closed-door meeting must occur, the Covered Individual conducting the meeting should seek to hold the meeting in a room with a window (e.g. in the conference room at the Ministry Center) and must inform another on-site Covered Individual. The door must remain unlocked, and the other Covered Individual should wait nearby and observe the meeting periodically.
3. If a meeting with a youth must occur away from a regular Immanuel ministry location, the Youth Director must be notified and give advance approval.
  - a. The Covered Individual must ensure that the youth's parents are informed of the meeting.
  - b. The Covered Individual should not be alone with the youth. They must meet in a public place or in a home where parent(s) are present. The Covered Individual should meet the youth at the location, not picking up or driving the youth to or from the location.
  - c. The Covered Individual and youth must not leave the designated location during the duration of the meeting.
4. A Covered Individual should not meet individually with a youth outside of the church building more than twice a month.
  - a. The Youth Director and the youth's parents must be notified in advance of each meeting.
  - b. For mentoring or sponsoring relationships between a Covered Individual and youth, the Youth Director must be given updates at least once a month.

In addition to the required safety steps and training outlined in this policy, Covered Individuals providing individualized ministry or mentorship to youth must be

well-known at and have attended the church for at least one year, and must have experience volunteering within the church.

## **Electronic Communication**

### **General Guidelines**

**Children:** No Covered Individual should engage in digital communication with children.

**Youth:** Under no circumstance should a Covered Individual maintain communication with a youth in Immanuel's ministry in any form that is not completely transparent and able to be monitored by the parents of the student. Below are guidelines for specific platforms.

- **Texting and Email:** All written digital communication (texting, email) between Covered Individuals and youth should be in a group thread context and should be open to observation from parents and other youth leaders.
- **Social Media:** Covered individuals should not connect with minors on social media. Should a minor send a request or direct message via social media, the correct course of action for the Covered Individual is to respond using a more appropriate form of communication.
- **Phone Calls:** Brief phone calls between a Covered Individual and an individual youth are appropriate when related to youth ministry activities or when ministerial in nature. If a longer conversation is needed, the Covered Individual should do so in person, in accordance with our policies, or should arrange for another Covered Individual or parent to join the call.

### **Virtual Environments**

We understand that engaging minors includes not only in-person but also virtual gatherings. Covered Individuals should use the following guidelines:

- The Rule of Three must be followed in all virtual environments.
- All participants, adults and minors, should be fully clothed, including portions of the body that may be "off camera."
- To promote a sense of safety, adults should not be on a bed or have a bed in the background of their camera.

- Covered Individuals may not have suggestive, political, racist, or other similar materials or images on their screens or backgrounds and should exercise care in screen sharing. Minors should be invited into similar standards.
- Virtual gathering links will employ available safety mechanisms, such as waiting rooms, controlled link distribution and disabled screen sharing from non-hosts.
- If any inappropriate, graphic, or harmful material is shared during the gathering, all parents of attendees will be notified.
  - If a minor is sharing inappropriate, graphic, or other harmful material, he or she will be immediately removed from the virtual environment and parents will be contacted.
- Parents must have access to the information about the virtual gathering and their rules for observation must be consistent with those of in-person gatherings.

## **Transportation and Travel Considerations**

### **Church Travel**

Covered Individuals must comply with all Immanuel Anglican policies when participating in any church-related travel. The trip coordinator is responsible for enforcing policies during trips and has the right to take disciplinary or other action, including, but not limited to, sending a Covered Individual or a minor home because of disregard for Immanuel's policies.

### **Transportation**

Covered Individuals age 23 or over may occasionally be in a position to provide transportation to minors. Covered Individuals shall not transport a minor except when it has been arranged by the church, or with the knowledge and consent of parents.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, this Policy does not prohibit carpools involving parents/guardians of minors who may also be volunteers of the church if arranged by the parents/guardians involved in the carpool with advance consent of parents/guardians. Any such carpools are not part of the Covered Individual's activities for the church and, as such, the church has no responsibilities of safety or otherwise in connection with such carpools.

The following guidelines should be strictly observed when involved in the transportation of minors for church activities:

1. Driver must have a valid state driver's license for the vehicle being operated and driving privileges must be in good standing. A copy of this driver's license should be submitted to the Ministry Leader.
2. Driver must have valid automobile insurance under applicable law and must submit a copy of proof of insurance to the Ministry Leader.
3. The Rule of Three should be followed.
4. Minors should be transported directly to their destination. Unauthorized stops to nonpublic places are not permitted except in the event of an emergency or other extenuating circumstances. (Longer trips may require planned stops for gas, lunch, etc.)
5. Covered Individuals should avoid physical contact with minors while in vehicles.
6. No mobile phones or other mobile devices may be used by the driver while driving.
7. A driver must follow all applicable driving and motor vehicle laws.
8. Driver must have read and signed a form including name, address, and acknowledgement that all of the above rules have been met.

### **Sleeping Arrangements**

It is anticipated that certain youth ministry activities may require overnight sleeping arrangements for youth and Covered Individuals, either on or off church property. In the event an activity requires sleeping arrangements, Covered Individuals must strictly observe the following rules:

- Boys and girls must sleep in separate areas.
- At least two Covered Individuals of the same sex as the youth they are supervising must be sleeping in areas for males and females.
- As long as any youth is awake, two Covered Individuals must also be awake to monitor until all are in bed.
- In the event that overnight arrangements do not include standard beds, each Covered Individual and youth must use single sleeping bags or blankets. In these instances, a "one-person-to-one bag or blanket" rule applies.

## **Personal Conduct**

### **Dress**

Covered Individuals must present themselves in appropriate attire while serving and must dress consistent with their biological sex.

### **Substances**

Covered Individuals are prohibited from using, possessing, or being under the influence of alcohol, marijuana, tobacco or nicotine products, or any illegal drugs while in any Immanuel facility, while traveling with minors, or while working with or supervising minors. In addition, it is unacceptable to supply any minor with any alcohol, marijuana, drugs, tobacco products, or smoking materials.

### **Photography**

Covered Individuals may not take photographs, videos or other images or recordings of a minor other than as pre-authorized by the church for ministry-related purposes. Church-authorized imagery is generally limited to recording or photographing church events and activities and should involve group photos and/or individual photos that are part of a series of photos of an event. No photos may be taken of someone in an unclothed state.

Taking pictures or videos of minors for non-ministry-related purposes is expressly prohibited, absent express advance approval by parents or legal guardians. Covered Individuals should not take selfies with an individual minor.

Photos posted by Immanuel Anglican Church on social media platforms are generally limited to group photos and/or individual photos that are part of a series of photos of an event. Parents must give consent for photos of their children to be used on the church's website, social media and promotional materials.

### **Cards & Gifts**

Covered Individuals may not provide gifts or cards to minors in Immanuel Anglican's Next Generation Ministries without the knowledge and consent of the Ministry Leader or the minor's parent or legal guardian.

## **Interactions & Relationships Outside of Church Activities**

The church understands that a Covered Individual may have a relationship with a minor that is separate from their role within the church. A Covered Individual must abide by this policy in all church-related activities and may not use any separate relationship with a minor to violate the conduct requirements of this manual while serving.

Covered Individuals are personally responsible for their own actions in relation to others served by Immanuel when engaged in any activities not sponsored by the church; Immanuel takes no responsibility for such actions.

# Step Four: Monitoring

**Monitoring** is the ongoing work of maintaining the healthy functioning of Immanuel Anglican's safety policies. Observation provides the accountability that ensures policies are being followed.

## **Monitoring Practices of Safety Coordinator**

The Safety Coordinator is responsible for monitoring the children's ministry area during Sunday programming. This includes unobserved and unannounced monitoring of volunteers and children in children's classrooms.

Safety plans for off-site events will be carefully reviewed in advance by the Safety Coordinator.

## **Monitoring Practices of all Covered Individuals**

All Covered Individuals should be able to access and remember policies, encourage each other in keeping the policies, and watch for policy violations and report them. (View section "Reporting Policy Violations" on page 32.)

## **Monitoring Practices of Parents**

An open invitation is extended to parents to visit classrooms and programs at any time, announced or unannounced. (As mentioned earlier in this policy, parents who desire to participate in or have continuous, ongoing contact with their children's programs will be required to complete Immanuel's screening and training process.)

## **Monitoring Practices of Entire Community**

All parties listed above *and* the wider church community should be mindful of the following Interacting policies and report violations:

- No child should ever be left unattended in the building or on the property during or following a church activity.
- All church activities involving minors shall be designed to adhere to the Rule of Three policy. Neither Covered Individuals nor other adults should conduct unobserved 1:1 meetings or interactions with children or youth.



## **Supervisory Enforcement of Policy**

Immanuel Anglican staff and volunteers who supervise Covered Individuals are charged with the diligent enforcement of this policy.

# Step Five: Responding & Reporting

**Responding and Reporting** in a prompt manner gives us the power to prevent or stop abuse and potentially gives a child or youth more time to heal.

## Responding to a Child or Youth Victim

When a child or youth reveals that they have experienced abuse, they need our calm and caring presence as we listen to their story.

Children and youth will often be reluctant to reveal that they have been abused and may share this information by accident. If they intend to disclose their abuse, they may gauge the listener's reaction by sharing only small parts of their story or by pretending that the abuse happened to a friend, only revealing the whole truth when they are confident that the listener is a safe person who believes them.

If the victim is a child or youth, disclosure of abuse cannot be kept confidential but must be reported to ensure their safety. This information must be communicated clearly and sensitively to the child or youth, who has already experienced betrayal and a violation of their agency through their experience of abuse.

Below are ways to support a child or youth who discloses their abuse:

### 1. Create a safe and caring environment.

- Respect the child or youth's privacy by finding a safe, non-threatening place to talk. In observance of the Rule of Three, another adult could be visible but out of hearing range.
- Remain calm as you listen, and avoid expressing shock or outrage. Keep a pace that is patient and slow.

### 2. Avoid leading questions.

- Let the child or youth use their own words to disclose.
- Do **not** ask leading questions, probe for details or make suggestions about what happened. Children and youth are often vague in their initial disclosure, but asking too many questions about abuse may cause distress or interfere with prosecution of the alleged offender.
- Do **not** ask questions that could make the child or youth feel responsible for the abuse or plant ideas that could taint their recollection and account.

- Ask open-ended questions (e.g. “Then what happened?”) to allow the child or youth to share their story in their own words. For example, ask “How did you get hurt?” rather than asking “Did someone do that to you?” Repeat what the child or youth says in their own words with a question inflection. (E.g. “Your daddy touched your privates?”) Listen to the response. Let them use their own words and repeat their words exactly again, followed by, “Is there anything else?”

### **3. Avoid making a statement.**

- Do **not** make immediate judgments or conclusions about the child or youth or the alleged perpetrator.
- Do **not** make statements about the perpetrator, whether to express support for the perpetrator or to make negative statements about him or her.
- Do **not** urge reconciliation with or forgiveness of the perpetrator.

### **4. Express belief, care and reassurance.**

- Believe their story. (False sexual abuse reports by children are rare.)
- Tell the child or youth: “I care about you.”
- Reassure the child or youth that he or she has done nothing wrong. Do **not** blame them for any part of the abuse. Reassure them that the abuse is not their fault.
- When you are completing the conversation, tell the child or youth, “This took a lot of courage. I’m proud of you for telling me.”

### **5. Set expectations for the next steps.**

- Communicate to the child or youth what to expect next and give them agency in making age-appropriate decisions.
- Be honest and tell the child or youth that you may need to report this information in order to keep them safe and get the help that is needed.
- Do not make any promises, such as keeping their disclosure confidential. Say instead, “We’re going to get the help we need.”

## **Steps Following a Disclosure**

- 1. Ensure the immediate safety of the child or youth.**
- 2. Refrain from investigating further.** Upon learning of any potential abuse, you

do not need to substantiate your suspicions and should not speak to the minor at length about it; instead promptly report according to the policies below. Refrain from investigating except to obtain readily available information required by DCFS (see list in “What to Report” section on page 30).

3. **Write down what the child or youth disclosed as accurately and quickly as possible.**
4. **Immediately report the disclosure, discovery or suspicion of child abuse to DCFS, local law enforcement (when appropriate) and church leadership.** Find steps for reporting in the following section.
5. **Maintain appropriate confidentiality.** Out of respect for the privacy of the individuals involved in the matter, the reporting individual should maintain confidentiality of the matter outside of 1) reporting to law enforcement or a child protection agency, 2) reporting to the proper church leaders according to this policy, and 3) notifying parent/guardian, unless the report is related to the conduct of the parent/guardian.

**Summary:** When a minor discloses abuse, listen with care, ensure the safety of the child or youth, refrain from making your own investigation, and make required reports.

## **Mandated Reporting to Civil Authorities**

As a volunteer in Immanuel’s NextGen Ministries, **you are a Mandated Reporter under Illinois law.** Mandated reporters must immediately report to civil authorities if “they have reasonable cause to believe that a child known to them in their professional or official capacities may be an abused or neglected child.” The suspected abuse or neglect does not need to have occurred during church-related activities to trigger a reporting requirement.

### **Consequences for Failing to Report**

Individual criminal penalties may result from the failure of a Mandated Reporter to make a required report. It is **not** the role of a reporter to decide if information regarding possible child abuse of a minor is valid or true before reporting it.

Failure to report is also a violation of this policy and is grounds for discipline, up to and including immediate termination of employment or volunteer status or termination of church membership.

## How to Report

**Immediate Danger:** When there is reasonable belief that any person is in immediate danger (e.g. an act of violence is actively happening or has just occurred), **call 911**.

**Abuse or Neglect of a Child:** If there is knowledge or reasonable belief of the abuse or neglect of a minor, **call 800-25-ABUSE (800-252-2873)** to immediately report to the Illinois Department of Child and Family Services (DCFS) Child Abuse Hotline. It is also appropriate to call local law enforcement (Chicago Police Department Non-Emergency Number: 311).

You need to make the report to DCFS immediately. Any delay in reporting could result in a loss of critical evidence, potentially be a violation of the law, and worst of all, enable the continued abuse of vulnerable minor. The role of a reporter is to inform DCFS when there is reason to believe that a child has been harmed or is in danger of being harmed — physically, sexually, or through neglect — and that a caretaker (any person responsible for a child) either committed the harm or should have taken steps to protect the child from the harm.

Mandated reporters are required to confirm their telephone report in writing on a form prescribed by DCFS within 48 hours after the oral report. These confirmation reports may be admissible as evidence in any administrative or judicial proceeding related to child abuse or neglect.<sup>1</sup>

## Reporting with Others

The church seeks to support all individuals who are required to make reports. As a mandated reporter, you may report to DCFS before reporting to the church or you may ask the Safety Coordinator, the Safeguarding Team or a clergy member for assistance in making a report to DCFS.

When two or more Immanuel mandated reporters share a reasonable cause to believe that a child may be an abused or neglected child, one of those reporters may be designated to make a single report. The report shall include the names and

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<sup>1</sup> Forms for confirming a telephone report are found at:  
[http://www2.illinois.gov/dcf/aboutus/notices/pages/com\\_communications\\_forms.aspx](http://www2.illinois.gov/dcf/aboutus/notices/pages/com_communications_forms.aspx).

contact information for the other mandated reporters who share the reasonable cause to believe that a child may be an abused or neglected child. The designated reporter must provide written confirmation of the report to those mandated reporters within 48 hours. If confirmation is not provided, those mandated reporters are individually responsible for immediately ensuring a report is made. Nothing precludes or may be used to preclude any person from individually reporting child abuse or child neglect.

If you have questions about your duties as a mandated reporter, you may seek assistance from the Safety Coordinator or the Immanuel Safeguarding Team.

## **What to Report**

When making the report to DCFS, have the following information ready to give to the hotline:

- the names and addresses of the child and his or her parents or other person responsible for his or her care;
- the age of the child;
- the gender of the child;
- the nature and extent of the child's injury or injuries, maltreatment or neglect;
- the approximate date and time the injury or injuries, maltreatment or neglect occurred;
- information concerning any previous injury or injuries to, or maltreatment or neglect of, the child or his or her siblings;
- the circumstances in which the injury or injuries, maltreatment or neglect came to be known to the reporter
- the name of the person or persons suspected to be responsible for causing such injury or injuries, maltreatment or neglect;
- the name of a safe person in the home that a childcare worker or DCFS could speak with;
- the reasons such person or persons are suspected of causing such injury or injuries, maltreatment or neglect;
- any information concerning any prior cases in which such person or persons have been suspected of causing an injury, maltreatment or neglect of a child; and

- whatever action, if any, was taken to treat, provide shelter or otherwise assist the child.

Even if this information is not readily available, the reporter should not delay a call to the hotline.

**Summary:** Immediately report suspected abuse or neglect to DCFS. You may report with the assistance of the Safety Coordinator, the Safeguarding Team or clergy.

## **Important Contacts for Reporting**

*To file a report with child protective services:*

### **IL Department of Children & Family Services**

(1-800) 25- ABUSE

(1-800) 255-2873

<https://www2.illinois.gov/dcfs/safekids/reporting/Pages/index.aspx>

*If a child is in danger call police:*

### **Police Department**

9-1-1

*For assistance in reporting:*

### **Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline**

(1-800) 422-4453.

## **Reporting to Church Authorities**

The church cannot address child abuse of a minor unless it is made aware of potential abuse. A safe environment depends upon a strong culture of reporting relevant information both to civil authorities (as appropriate) and to the church.

## **Reporting Suspicions of Abuse or Neglect**

Any person who knows or suspects abuse or neglect must immediately report such information to the Safety Coordinator, in addition to reporting to civil authorities.

Those reporting the abuse or neglect should make written documentation of the report using the "Form for Report of Suspected Child Abuse" available from the Safety Coordinator.

## **Reporting Policy Violations**

Covered Individuals should also report any policy violations to the Safety Coordinator. Policy violations include failure to adhere to the behavioral guidelines in this policy, as well as any inappropriate behaviors toward a minor in the church community. Reports should be made immediately to the Safety Coordinator via phone, email, or in person.

## **Immanuel Safeguarding Team**

A Covered Individual may make a report directly to the Immanuel Safeguarding Team if he or she wishes to make a report about the conduct of the Safety Coordinator or prefers to report to the Safeguarding Team. The Safety Coordinator will inform the Safeguarding Team of any reports of abuse or neglect that are made.

**Summary:** In addition to reporting to the civil authorities, a report should be made to church authorities.

## **Immanuel's Response to Reports**

Upon receipt of any report under this policy, Immanuel will determine appropriate steps for response and care of the individuals and the church community. The church will consider whether interim measures are needed to promote the safety and welfare of minors, such as making a safety plan or placing a volunteer or leader on leave.



### **Recusal of Persons Accused**

No person named or related to a person named in an allegation of abuse will be involved in documenting or responding to a report of abuse or neglect.

### **Confidentiality**

To protect the privacy of minors and any victims, the church will strive to keep reports made under this policy confidential. The church reserves the right to share information about someone who has been accused under this policy to the extent that doing so is deemed appropriate by the church to promote the safety and welfare of minors.

### **Non Retaliation**

The church prohibits retaliation based on a good-faith report made under this manual or participation in any church process or any legal proceeding related to a report. Concerns of retaliation should be reported to the Safety Coordinator or the Safeguarding Team.

# Statement 1: Acknowledgement & Agreement

I have received and read a copy of Immanuel Anglican's Policies for the Protection of Children and Youth and understand the importance of the material in the manual.

I agree to abide by these guidelines while serving or working in Immanuel Anglican Church.

I understand that the manual may be modified, and that any guideline may be amended, revised, or eliminated by Immanuel Anglican Church.

I have reviewed the duties listed in my ministry position description, and I agree to fulfill them.

I understand it is my responsibility to review any new guidelines that may be created and distributed.

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Covered Individual's Name (please print)

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*Signature of Parent or Guardian (if the above individual is a Minor)*

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*[Sign this copy and retain it for your records.]*

# Statement 2: Background Screening

Have you ever (please circle your answers):

1. Been arrested for, or convicted of, any crime involving child abuse and/or neglect, possession of child pornography, or had any such conviction expunged?

Yes No

2. Been charged with child sexual abuse in a civil proceeding?

Yes No

3. Committed an act of child sexual abuse?

Yes No

Has any other member of your household:

4. Been arrested for, or convicted of, any crime involving child abuse and/or neglect, possession of child pornography, or had any such conviction expunged?

Yes No

5. Been charged with child sexual abuse in a civil proceeding?

Yes No

6. Committed an act of child sexual abuse?

Yes No

I agree to notify the Safety Coordinator of any and all changes to the above statements.

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Printed Name

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Signature & Date

*[Sign this copy and retain it for your records.]*

# Statement 1: Acknowledgement & Agreement

I have received and read a copy of Immanuel Anglican Church’s Policies for the Protection of Children and Youth and understand the importance of the material in the manual.

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I understand that the manual may be modified, and that any guideline may be amended, revised, or eliminated by Immanuel Anglican Church.

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---

Covered Individual’s Name (please print)

---

*Signature of Parent or Guardian (if the above individual is a Minor)*

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*[Sign this copy and return it to the Safety Coordinator.]*

# Statement 2: Background Screening

Have you ever (please circle your answers):

1. Been arrested for, or convicted of, any crime involving child abuse and/or neglect, possession of child pornography, or had any such conviction expunged?

Yes No

2. Been charged with child sexual abuse in a civil proceeding?

Yes No

3. Committed an act of child sexual abuse?

Yes No

Has any other member of your household:

4. Been arrested for, or convicted of, any crime involving child abuse and/or neglect, possession of child pornography, or had any such conviction expunged?

Yes No

5. Been charged with child sexual abuse in a civil proceeding?

Yes No

6. Committed an act of child sexual abuse?

Yes No

I agree to notify the Safety Coordinator of any and all changes to the above statements.

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Printed Name

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Signature & Date

*[Sign this copy and return it to the Safety Coordinator.]*